



## CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

April 7, 2000

### **H.R. 852** **Freedom to E-File Act**

*As ordered reported by the House Committee on Agriculture on March 29, 2000, with a subsequent amendment*

#### **SUMMARY**

H.R. 852 would require the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to establish an electronic filing and retrieval system to enable the public to file paperwork electronically with selected agencies and to access public information regarding the programs administered by these agencies. The bill would authorize annual appropriations to operate the system.

CBO estimates that implementation of H.R. 852 would cost about \$11 million over the 2001-2005 period, assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts. The bill would not affect direct spending or receipts, therefore pay-as-you-go procedures would not apply. H.R. 852 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA) and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

#### **ESTIMATED COST TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT**

The estimated budgetary impact of H.R. 852 is shown in the following table. The costs of this legislation fall within budget function 350 (agriculture).

		By Fiscal Year, in Millions of Dollars					
		2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
<b>SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION</b>							
Spending Under Current Law <sup>a</sup>							
Budget Authority/Estimated Authorization Level		10	10	11	11	11	12
Estimated Outlays		43	10	11	11	11	12
Proposed Changes							
Authorization Level		0	3	2	2	2	2
Estimated Outlays		0	3	2	2	2	2
Spending Under H.R. 852							
Estimated Authorization Level <sup>a</sup>		10	13	13	13	13	14
Estimated Outlays		43	13	13	13	13	14

a. The 2000 level is the amount appropriated for USDA's Chief Information Officer that year. Estimated spending in 2000 includes amounts from the \$59 million appropriated for this activity in 1999. The 2001-2005 amounts assume continuation of this level of spending, adjusted for anticipated inflation.

## **BASIS OF ESTIMATE**

Not later than two years after the date of enactment, USDA would be required to complete the establishment of a computer system that producers can use to electronically file all paper work required by selected agencies of USDA. The bill authorizes the appropriation of \$3 million in fiscal year 2001 for this purpose, and \$2 million in each subsequent fiscal year.

**PAY-AS-YOU-GO CONSIDERATIONS:** None.

## **INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND PRIVATE-SECTOR IMPACT**

H.R. 852 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in UMRA and would have no significant impact on the budgets of state, local, or tribal governments.

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